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Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Note verbale dated 11 June 2018 from the Permanent Mission of Armenia to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Armenia to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and kindly requests the Office of the High Commissioner to circulate the comment by the Department of Information and Public Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Artsakh (Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh) on the anniversary of the massacre in Maragha (see annex),* a village in Nagorno-Karabakh, which is currently under the occupation of the armed forces of Azerbaijan, as a document of the thirty-eighth session of the Human Rights Council, under agenda item 4.

* Reproduced as received, in the language of submission only.

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Annex to the note verbale dated 11 June 2018 from the Permanent Mission of Armenia to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Comment by the Department of Information and Public Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Artsakh

The massacre of the inhabitants of the village of Maragha of the Artsakh Republic's Martakert region, committed by the Azerbaijani army on April 10, 1992, is one of the most tragic episodes of Azerbaijan's military aggression against Artsakh.

After intensive artillery shelling, the Azerbaijani troops invaded the village of Maragha, where 118 people remained, mostly the elderly, disabled, women, and children. As a result of the war crime committed with unprecedented cruelty by the Azerbaijani armed forces, over 50 people were killed and the rest, including 9 children and 29 women, were taken hostage. Some of them were later returned, but the fate of 19 hostages remains unknown to this day.

The village was liberated by the armed forces of Artsakh, however two weeks later, it was again attacked, and those who had returned to bury their relatives became victims of the new atrocities of the Azerbaijani army.

The attack on the village was not conditioned by a military necessity, but was primarily aimed at exterminating its peaceful civilian population. The crime in Maragha became the continuation of the series of pogroms and deportations of Armenians in Sumgait, Baku, Kirovabad and other settlements of Azerbaijan, as well as in the villages of Northern Artsakh in 1988–1991. These were intended to strangle at its birth the national-liberation struggle of the Armenians of Artsakh and deprive them of the homeland through ethnic cleansing and terror against Artsakh and the Armenian population of Azerbaijan.

The impunity of the organizers and perpetrators of these crimes created a fertile ground in Azerbaijan for enrooting the cult of hatred towards Armenians as a state policy and unbridled a propaganda of xenophobia, intolerance, and militarism. Azerbaijan's aggression against Artsakh in April 2016, which was accompanied by war crimes against civilians and soldiers of the Artsakh Defense Army, demonstrated that the methods and approaches of the Azerbaijani side remained unchanged.